



Holmes District School Board  
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**SUPERINTENDENT**  
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JUL 15 2005

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**BOARD MEMBERS**

Sid Johnson, Chairman  
Rickey Callahan, Vice Chairman  
Jason Motley  
Anthony Register  
Gary Scott

DATE: June 28, 2005  
TO: Federal Communications Commission  
FROM: Steve Griffin, Superintendent of Schools  
RE: Request for Waiver

**CC Docket No. 02-6**

**Contact Information:** Norma D. Dunn; 701 East Pennsylvania Avenue, Bonifay, Florida, 32425; Voice - 850-547-3064 ext. 252; Fax - 850-547-3568; [dunn\\_n@firn.edu](mailto:dunn_n@firn.edu)

We wish to request a waiver for the following:

**Appellant Name** – Steve Griffin, Superintendent of Holmes County Schools

**Applicant Name** – Holmes County School District

**BEN** – 127629

**Application number** – 463914

**Name of Letter and Funding Year** – Funding Year 2005 Form 471 Certification

**Date of Document:** May 4, 2005

**Reason for denial:** Funding year 2005 Form 471 certification postmarked outside of window.

The Form 471 request was solely for Telecommunications and internet access.

In February, 2005, Holmes County School District had an enrollment of 3,361 students. The following broad factors have impact upon the district implementation of technology in our schools and community:

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**Economic**

- Average wage is below state average in all categories.
- 24.27% of our population is below poverty level while 33.6% of our children are below poverty level.
- Although agriculture provides the county with its economic base, the corrections and school system are its largest employers.
- 55% of our students qualify for free/reduced lunches.

**Demographic and Social**

- This is an economically and culturally deprived area with a high rate of illiteracy.
- At-risk populations are growing, often shifting emphasis on elementary, secondary, and adult educational programs.
- The number of single-parent homes is growing.
- There are a growing number of non-English speaking people.

**Education & Technology**

- 45% of our 25 and older population is functionally illiterate.
- 34.8% of the population of 25 years and over have no high school diploma.

Holmes County is a small rural county with a high rate of poverty. Even though our district is small, the administrative staff is still required to address all the issues as that of a larger district. Therefore, a few people are given the task of administering these programs and all they entail. Occasionally, because one person juggles so many different programs, important details are overlooked, as in this case. The electronic filing of Form 471 was completed within the filing window. However, although the paper certification had been signed the same day the Form 471 had been filed, it was discovered at a later date that the paper certification had not been mailed. At the time the Form 471 was filed, many activities within the district required our attention. It is regrettable that one so important as the filing of our certification was overlooked.

Being a poor rural district, it is mandatory that we seek grant funding and ERATE discounts to assist in meeting the educational needs of our students through purchasing technology and telecommunication services. Without these funds, our students will be part of the digital divide that Holmes County has fought so hard to avoid.

We have been part of the ERATE program since its conception and have made every effort to follow program rules and meet our deadlines. It is regrettable that after being in compliance all these years this one mishap will penalize our students so gravely. We beseech you to look at this request for waiver from that angle.

Presently we have a wide area network with two T-1 lines serving all the schools. An additional T-1 is needed to accommodate the increased traffic demand of our instructional programming. We have worked so hard to reach the National Technology goals, that we have become dependent upon the Internet. The only way we can afford the Internet access is through ERATE discounts. Our Internet connections are crucial to the delivery of our instructional programming.

There are no other funding sources that can make up the difference in funds that we will lose through this mishap. Regrettably, we may have to forego Internet access this next school year to meet our district needs.

We appreciate any assistance you can give us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Griffin", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Griffin, Superintendent of Schools